

Acknowledgments

This book has its origins in 2015, when the three of us and our colleague Frank Usbeck, having just finished a project on the poetics and politics of narrative, became increasingly interested in thinking and theorizing beyond this seemingly ubiquitous form. Having focused so much on the well-established category of narrative, we now wanted to divert our attention to artifacts and formations that reached beyond, challenged, or ‘hybridized’ narrativity. Eventually, these efforts resulted in an academic network on “Narrative Liminality and/in the Formation of American Modernities” (www.narrative-liminality.de), which ran from 2017 to 2021 and was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

During these years, the members of the network met in four different workshops, collaborated on an online platform, and engaged with other scholars in an international conference at Leipzig University, Germany, in October 2019. Shortly thereafter, the Corona pandemic precluded further in-person meetings, but the results of the discussions and collaborations among participants in the network are now collected in the present volume. All ten members have contributed articles to this book, along with a number of other scholars who interacted with the “Narrative Liminality” network as speakers in workshops or presenters during the 2019 conference. We want to thank all of them for the immense energy and enthusiasm they brought to the network, the insightful theoretical and conceptual discussions, and the productive spirit of collaboration that was with us during these years. Together, we pushed for new ways of conceptualizing what is beyond narrative and how one can study it. We also want to thank those colleagues who shared their expertise and insights with us along the way but who could not contribute to this book, among them Jeremy Douglass and Jared Gardner. While considerable work of employing and refining our concept of narrative liminality remains to be done, the network’s collective effort laid important groundwork for thinking about narrative and other symbolic forms without reifying the boundaries between these forms.

We are particularly happy that the results of these years of thinking about the borderlands of narrativity can be presented in open-access form, and we want to thank the DFG as well as Leipzig University’s Open Access Publication Fund for

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